

However, the most tragic situation is a student whose needs cannot be met because the services are not there or the family can simply not afford them, and that is very tragic. The public school systems across this country, which are provincial in jurisdiction, are designed for the average student. Certainly the purpose of our educational system is to educate the masses. The general educational system simply cannot meet the needs of all children.

The provincial system that we have set up across this country is unable and is not intended to meet the needs of every person. What does a parent do if he or she has a child who does not fit into the normal channels? This child may be intellectually impaired or physically impaired in some fashion. There are many, many thousands of children who simply do not fit the normal pattern.

Over the years we have made progress. Certainly there are programs and there are public institutions with respect to assisting those who are intellectually impaired, visually impaired in certain cases, certainly hearing impaired, and so on. They do not meet all the needs. Many students simply do not fall within the mandate of a particular institution or they are from a particular area of the country that does not have access to institutions. Certainly rural Canada is an area where this would be very applicable, where students simply do not have the facilities there.

There is one particular group I would like to highlight that is really being hard hit—those with learning disabilities. Those who suffer from learning disabilities make up fully 10 per cent of the population of this country. A lot of Canadians are not even aware of what a learning disability is and how it is described.

I am going to read a definition as set out by the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada:

Children with learning disabilities are not intellectually disabled. Their intelligence may compare favourably with that of their peers, while their performance level does not. In other words, a learning disability is identifiable and specific, and inhibits a child from learning in accordance with his or her ability and potential. Ten per cent of the population has learning disabilities and these may affect them in one or more of the following areas: attention, memory, reasoning, co-ordination, communication, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, social confidence and emotional maturation.

### *Private Members' Business*

Students with learning disabilities have trouble receiving information through the senses and transmitting that information accurately to the brain.

Only a small fraction of students in this country today who have learning disabilities are receiving the attention they deserve through the formalized education system and the public educational system. Some of those children who do not receive that attention through the public institutions go to private institutions. Those are not cheap. I have had occasion to chat with various colleges and so on across the country and various associations for the learning disabled. It is a major concern for them.

I had a letter from a woman named Judy Flannery who is in charge of the Strategic Learning Centre of Montreal. In that letter she gives me an example, and she says that this is a typical example of thousands of kids right across this country:

"I am sending you information from our accounts about a student who came to us for one year because her school was unable to teach her to read by the end of grade 3. She is a student with learning disabilities whose parents had her tutored by our centre twice a week for a year. As a result of our work, she moved from being a non-reader and writer who had to repeat her grade, to a competent student reading and writing at grade level. The extra help her school had been able to provide had been wholly inadequate for her needs. Her parents were very anxious that she be able to succeed at school since they rightly felt she was bright enough to do so.

You will notice that her parents paid for her two tutoring sessions a week—\$32 an hour for July and August and \$35 an hour from September on. This was for a period from July, 1990 through June, 1991 for a total of \$2,346.

This student is now in the top quarter of her class. She is confident of her ability to succeed in school and is keeping up well with all her school requirements. Her parents are exceedingly pleased with her present progress. They had to pay all of the cost for our specialized services which were what their daughter needed and which the school was unable to provide. They paid out of their own pockets with no income tax relief whatsoever. Fortunately, they were able to afford these services. Many people, however, are not able to do so and